

Air Quality Action Plan – The 21 Actions Explained

Park and Ride Section

Action 1: Increase the parking capacity of Durham City Park and Ride sites to help incentivise the use of the Park and Ride service across the City.

A stretch Action will be to investigate the feasibility of new sites on routes where there is currently no provision.

Action 5: Engage further with Park and Ride operators to introduce Zero Emission buses on park and ride routes and implement funding opportunities through liaison with Transport North-East.

Action 7: Investigate extending the existing number of days and/or hours of operation of all Park and Ride sites.

Action 11: Identify opportunities to install complimentary additional services to the Park and Ride service across the City Centre and development sites e.g. cycle storage/micro mobility/bicycles and e-bikes plus improved services at Park and Ride sites such as parcel pick-up and delivery and extending EV (Electric Vehicles) charging facilities.

(Micro-mobility refers to different forms of transport for example e-bikes or electric scooters which can be hired for use)

Parking Section

Action 6: Use parking policy and a revised pricing strategy for council owned car parks and Council on street parking to assist in tackling traffic congestion within Durham City by encouraging modal shift to cleaner, more sustainable travel modes. In addition, investigate the introduction of other policies such as emission-based car parking charges, to further encourage modal shift.

(Modal shift refers to a change from one form of transport to another where there are advantages such as costs, time, flexibility. Sustainable travel refers to transport which has less reliance on natural resources and can help to reduce the impact on our environment)

Electric vehicles (EVs) Section

Action 4: Encourage the uptake of Electric Vehicles (EVs) across the County by supporting the provision of EV charging including fast and rapid charging and EV filling stations where this is appropriate.

Action 12: Implementation of a scheme to offer the use of EV vans on a free trial for 2 to 3 weeks to small and medium enterprises to promote the uptake of Electric vehicles.

Buses, taxis, and light good vehicles Section

Action 8: Work with bus operators to track the emissions classification of buses on routes of specific areas of concern, to inform which buses should be operating within the Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) to provide cleaner exhaust emissions.

(This action will help us to have a better understanding of the emissions from buses on routes through the city so that operators can begin to change to those with less emissions).

Stretch Action to identify and implement, where appropriate, any funding streams for retrofitting buses, purchasing hybrids and /or alternatives where they may have the greatest benefits for air quality within Durham.

(Retrofitting would allow for those buses in operation to continue to be used but would have lower emissions)

Action 14: Improve journey quality offer for users at public transport hubs and Durham city bus station with improved vehicles, priority arrangements to further encourage modal shift alongside improved Real Time Passenger information.

(Priority arrangements could include more bus lanes so that journeys are quicker and more appealing to people, so they change their preferred form of transport)

Action 15: Improve environmental facilities in the Bus Station including Green Wall/ Water Harvesting and Photovoltaics.

(Green walls are planted wall which in the winter help to insulate the building and reduce heating. Water Harvesting allow the reuse of rainwater in the building and Photovoltaics refer to solar panels which turn light into energy to run the building)

Action 16: Review the licensed vehicle taxi fleet operating in Durham. Subject to the outcome of this review, an update of the previous taxi emission study on the Durham Taxi fleet may be required.

Action 19: Obtain a better understanding of the freight and delivery fleet operating in Durham, potentially followed by a feasibility study for the introduction of a freight micro-consolidation scheme to serve Durham City to improve air quality from the shipping of goods into and out of the city.

(Micro-consolidation schemes aim to transfer goods from larger vehicles to smaller, electric vehicles travelling into the city to reduce congestion, pollution, and parking issues)

Action 21: Investigate Intelligent transport systems in more detail including Split Cycle Offset Optimisation Technique (SCOOT) improvements and funding opportunities west of Durham City Centre and implement bus priority measures on the major bus corridors.

(SCOOT is software that manages traffic flow as it is occurring and responds to the amount of traffic to control the traffic signals and help to keep traffic moving more effectively)

New developments Section

Action 2: Screen any proposed development in accordance with the latest up to date guidance on air quality. Support any development with air quality and traffic assessments that take into consideration cumulative development, where screening identifies there may be a significant adverse effect on air quality.

(This will help to understand the impact on the air quality in the city before any new developments are agreed)

Action 3: Impose conditions that comply with the provision of Policy 21 (Delivering Sustainable Transport) of the County Durham Plan.

(Policy 21 of the County Durham Plan aims to reduce car traffic by encouraging the use of public transport, cycling and walking)

Greener environment Section

Action 18: Review the work previously undertaken in relation to green infrastructure within the AQMA, and where practicable implement the recommendations made.

(Green infrastructure is a network of multi-functional green space and other green features such as green roofs and walls which can deliver quality of life and environmental benefits for communities)

Action 20: Implement the Strategic Cycling and Walking Delivery Plan 2019-2029

(This plan aims to encourage more walking and cycling to reduce traffic, pollution and encourage healthier lifestyles)

Raising Awareness Section

Action 9: Work with major employers in Durham City and assist with the development, implementation and enforcement of workplace travel plans including reporting, evidencing uptake and regular review.

(The council can require employers to create a travel plan through planning application processes. These help to reduce over dependence on car use and help their employees to find other ways to carry out their work such as public transport, car share, walking or cycling or working from home)

Action 10: Develop web pages and other forms of social marketing to increase awareness of air quality issues and promote behavioural change.

(Social marketing refers to ways in which we create, communicate and deliver campaigns which influence behaviours that benefit society (public health, safety, the environment, and communities))

Action 13: Define and Implement a Public Awareness Campaign focusing on air quality.

Action 17: Use variable message signs (VMS) to provide information regarding air quality.

(VMS are electronic roadside signs that display messages to travellers such as road conditions, accidents and can also be used to show the air quality conditions in an area).